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Title: Regarding constitution of a dam on river Mahendratanya near Melliaputti in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh thereby affecting the agriculture in Orissa.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Sir, a dawn to dusk bandh call has been successfully observed in Gajapati district of Orissa protesting against the decision of Andhra Pradesh Government to construct a dam and diversion weir over the River Mahendra Tanaya near Melliaputti in Srikakulam district. The Government of Andhra Pradesh had mooted this proposal in 2005 but around 50 villages in Parlakhemundi area, Rayagada and Gosani blocks would be deprived of water from River Mahendra Tanaya if it goes ahead with the project. It would severely affect agriculture in the region as these villages depend upon the river for irrigation and also drinking water. Also, the Andhra Project would submerge 1100 acres of cultivable land in Gajapati district and would affect 860 families. It would submerge land in Akada, Manikapatna, Khambagaon, Dimirigaon, Bengasahi and Sankuda villages besides the approach road to the historic Mahendragiri Hills from Mandasa.

From Orissa side, a proposal is pending approval from the Central Government. Construction of a water reservoir over river Mahendratanya at Kaithapadar would irrigate a huge ayacut area in Rayagada Block and Parlakhemundi. This Rs. 100 crore project would also provide drinking water to Parlakhemundi town and would not submerge any village. This project has got technical clearance from the Central Water Commission and awaits the approval of the Tribal Welfare Ministry.

I urge upon the Central Government to intervene in the matter and restrain the Andhra Pradesh Government from taking any unilateral decision of constructing dams over riparian rivers.